

1.2.2 Achieve Land Use and Transportation Planning Goals

Achieve land use and transportation planning goals addresses a need for a Transportation System Improvement that is consistent with the goals of the 2020 RTP prepared by CATS in cooperation with NIPC, and local land use and transportation plans prepared by Will County and local governments. At the regional level, CATS is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the northeastern Illinois region. CATS has overall authority for planning highway and transit improvements with regional significance. Over the course of this project, CATS prepared and adopted two regional transportation plans. The first, the 2010 Transportation System Development Plan (2010 TSD), was adopted in April 1989. This plan was in effect upon completion of the 1996 FEIS. Since completion of the 1996 FEIS, CATS adopted a new long-range transportation plan. This plan, the 2020 RTP, was adopted in November 1997. It replaced the year 2010 TSD as the region's plan for future transportation improvements. Both the 2010 TSD and the 2020 RTP included the extension of I-355 as an integral component of the regional plan. The 2010 TSD included the I-355 South Extension as a proposed new expressway. The 2020 RTP designates the I-355 South Extension as an approved, but yet to be constructed facility.

At the local level, Will County and municipal governments have planning authority within the Project Corridor. Will County has planning jurisdiction over unincorporated areas of the Project Corridor. Municipal government has jurisdiction over Project Corridor incorporated lands.

Both Will County and municipal government of the Project Corridor have adopted land use plans. These plans define future land use goals and contain maps that delineate planned land use. These maps represent a vision of how Will County and municipal government plan to optimize future land use to meet county and municipal goals. These maps serve as the basis for local zoning by which county and local governments regulate development to ensure its consistency with adopted land use plans.

Exhibit 1-5 presents a composite of current land use maps showing existing and planned land use within the Project Corridor. The source maps are the most recently adopted land use plan maps of Will County and the Project Corridor municipalities. The source maps classify land use into numerous categories including residential, commercial, industrial, open space, park and agriculture land use. To simplify the Exhibit, these categories were consolidated into residential, commercial/industrial and open space/park land. Open space/park land includes forest preserves, local parks, agricultural lands and open space.

As depicted in Exhibit 1-5, Will County and the Project Corridor municipalities have adopted land use plans that designate over 75 percent of the Project Corridor for residential and commercial/industrial development. These adopted land use maps were prepared using a public process to ensure consistency with local goals and priorities.

At the County level, land use goals include promoting contiguous, urbanized growth in the northern portion of Will County as a means to maintain the rural character of the County's southern portion ([Teska, 1996](#)). The Project Corridor falls within the area designated for urbanized growth. Exhibit 1-6 presents the current adopted Will County land use plan map. Municipal land use plans within the Project Corridor have similar goals of promoting planned development.

The proposed Transportation System Improvement would be consistent with county and municipal land use planning goals because it would focus and service growth within the Project Corridor, an area planned for development.

Local government has planned for development within the Project Corridor based on local goals, priorities and recognition of market forces driving development. These market forces have already resulted in rapid growth within the Project Corridor and include land availability and cost, quality of education, public safety and the desire for open surroundings and low densities ([NIPC, 1998](#)).

Overall, the population of Will County increased 10 percent between 1980 and 1990 according to the U.S. Census. NIPC regional forecasts for the existing airports land use scenario project Will County population to increase 100 percent between 1990 and 2020 placing Will County among the fastest growing counties in Illinois. Currently, the political subdivisions of Will County located within the Project Corridor account for 10 percent of Will County's land area and over 60 percent of its population ([U.S. Census, 1990](#)).

Factors contributing to rapid existing and forecasted growth rates include the revitalization of older cities within the Project Corridor such as Lemont and New Lenox, which grew in population by 102 and 154 percent, between 1990 and 1998 ([U.S. Census, 1990](#)). Within the Study Area, NIPC forecasts population and employment to increase 82 and 111 percent by the year 2020. Figure 1-1 presents NIPC 2020 No-Action population and employment forecasts for the Study Area ([ACG, 2000](#)).

